(c) if so, what steps are proposed to be taken so as to make price tagging compulsory?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI AJIT PANJA): (a) to (c) The Essential Commodities Act, 1955 as well as the Standards of Weights & Measures Act, 1976 do not prohibit the traders to sell essential commodities in loose form. However, under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 in exercise of the powers delegated, the States/Union Territories have issued Price Display Orders in respect of Essential Commodities specified in their respective Orders. Violation of the Price Display Orders invite stringent penal provisions under the Essential Commodities Act. If the commodities are sold in packages, in terms of provisions of Standards of Weights and Measures (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 1977, it is mandatory for each manufacturer to indicate on such packaged commodities its identity, net contents, date of packing, name of manufacture/packer and the sale price which is intended to protect the consumer from over-charging. Violation of the Packaged Commodities Rules, 1977 invites penal provisions. There is no provision under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955 to direct any trader who puts up articles on 'grand sale' to attach price tags specifying the original price and the sale price. The Central Government has been advising the States/Union Territories from time to time for vigorous implementation of the Price Display Orders. Since the States/Union Territories are enforcing price display orders, the question of making price tagging compulsory does not arise.

Evasion of excise duty by golden Tobacco Company

1595. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Golden Tobacco Company has been found evading huge excise duty by not printing the prices of cigarettes manufactured by them;

(b) if so, what is the estimated amount of excise duty evaded by the company during the last three years, year-wise; and

(c) whether any action is being taken by Government for the recovery of the evaded excise duty, and if not, what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Evasion of excise duty by voltas Ltd.

1596. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a whether Government's attention has been drawn to the press report which appeared in the "Times of India" of the 18th Feburary, 1986 to the effect that a multinational company, Voltas Limited has been found to have evaded excise duty to the tune of Rs. 3 crores;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) what action has been taken by Government against the company?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI JANARDHAN POOJARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) A large number of incriminating documents have been seized from the office premises of the company from which it appears that the company has evaded central excise duty of a substantial amount. The document, indicated complicity on the part of several senior officials of the Company in the matter of duty evasion and they were arrested. The prosecution complaint against the Company and the officers is being field in the court shortly.